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Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Sixty-third plenary session
Geneva, 15-17 June 2015
Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda
Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists

Implementation of the UNECE Statistical Programme 2014

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Report of the Work Session on Statistical Data Editing

Summary

The Work Session on Statistical Data Editing was held held in Paris, France, from 28 to 30 April 2014 as part of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical Programme 2014-2015.

The present document is the summary report of that meeting and is provided to inform the Conference of European Statisticians of the organization and outcomes of the meeting.

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1. The Work Session on Statistical Data Editing was held in Paris, France, from 28 to 30 April 2014 at the invitation of National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE). It was attended by participants from: Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States of America. The European Commission was represented by Eurostat. Representatives from the following international organizations also attended: Eurasian Economic Commission (EURASEC), International Labour Organization (ILO), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

2. The agenda contained the following substantive topics:

(a) Getting the support of all people when implementing data editing

(b) Selective editing / macro editing

(c) New and emerging methods

(d) Editing of census and social data

(e) International collaboration and software & tools

3. Mr. Steven Vale (UNECE) opened the meeting by stressing the changes in official statistics, with much interest in the official statistical community on concepts such as modernisation, big data and data revolution. Data editing is at the heart of many of these changes, as there remains a need to ensure data are fit for use. However data editing needs to evolve and this would be a common theme throughout the Work Session.

4. Ms. Fabienne Rosenwald, Director of Business Statistics, welcomed participants on behalf of INSEE. She spoke about the need for standardisation of editing processes across statistical domains, and the need to respond to new data sources.

5. Mr. Claude Poirier (Canada) was elected Chairman of the Work Session. He stressed quality of the papers, and that the whole statistical community would benefit from that. He outlined the need for a future work programme that meets the needs of participating organisations as far as possible. He invited volunteers to propose a list of topics for future work. Mr. Emmanuel Gros (France), Ms. Sarah Giessing (Germany), Mr. Gergely Horvath (Hungary), Mr. Marco Di Zio (Italy) and Mr. Sander Scholtus (Netherlands) agreed to take on this role.

6. The proposals for future work included:

(a) Selective and macro-editing

- Quality assessment of selective editing
- Unification of selective editing approaches
- Selective editing for classification variables
- Treatment of issues relating to statistical units in business statistics
- Highlight complementarity between selective editing and macro-editing
- Case studies

(b) Managing and supporting changes related to editing and imputation

- Managing/monitoring the editing and imputation process
- Managing changes to the editing and imputation process
- Managing cultural changes

- Getting new methods implemented
- Standardization/harmonization

(c) Software tools and international collaboration

- Software development
- Collaboration with information technology specialists
- SAS vs R
- Standardization/harmonization on an international level

(d) Evaluation and feedback

- Indicators for editing and imputation
- Using information from editing and imputation to improve the statistical process
- Estimation of uncertainty due to editing and imputation

(e) Editing and imputation with non-traditional data sources

- Editing and imputation for administrative data
- Editing and imputation in combination with Big Data
- Editing and imputation with multi-source data
- Editing during electronic data collection

(f) New and emerging methods

- Methods related to editing and imputation that are either new or emerging (or both)
- Innovative applications of existing methods

(g) Development of a common, generic process framework for statistical data editing. This could be done by a task team under the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services, and presented at the next Work Session.

7. Mr. Gergely Horvath, on behalf of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office, offered to host the next Work Session on Statistical Data Editing in Budapest in autumn 2015.

8. All background documents and presentations for the meeting are available on the website of the UNECE Statistical Division (http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2014.04.sde.html).

9. The participants adopted the present report before the Work Session adjourned.

10. The Chairman thanked INSEE for the excellent facilities, the Organising Committee for preparing the content of the Work Session, the participants and authors of papers for their contributions, and the UNECE Secretariat for their support.